

# **STM Youth Social Media Survey**

In our day and age, nearly every teen uses some form of social media on a regular basis. Social media is an amazing tool of communication, but as with all other technology, it is important to be aware of the risks – especially when it comes to our children.

**In the Spring of 2015, nearly 70 high school students from STM participated in an informal survey of what STM teens use for social media.**

## **OUR FINDINGS:**

- Almost ALL used TEXTING as their primary communication.
- YouTube is the most popular internet site (used by nearly 100% of our teens).
- Instagram & SnapChat are the most popular social media apps.
- Twitter has the 3rd highest usage among our teens.
- The social media app Vine edged out Facebook use.
- Tumblr and Pinterest are also moderately used.
- The apps on the bottom of the list are also worth noting:
  - Wanelo, Reddit, Ask.fm, Whisper, Google+ and YO are used by only a handful of our teens -- but they ARE in use.
- Not used by the surveyed teens in 2015:
  - Kik Messenger, WhatsApp, Yik Yak, and Omegle.

## **WHY DO PARENTS NEED TO KNOW THIS?**

**Many of the most popular apps used by our kids have safety risks:**

- **Instagram, Snapchat** and **texting** can be used for bullying, sexting, and sending other inappropriate or embarrassing pictures.
- **Vine** has funny content, but most is inappropriate for kids
- **Ask.fm** lets users ask & answer anonymous questions; on **Whisper** users share "confessional" secrets.
  - Both Ask.fm and Whisper contain creepy and dark content and have been linked to cyberbullying and teen suicides.
- It is GOOD NEWS that our teens don't use Yik Yak – a location based app that circulates anonymous rumors, opinions, bullying, and explicit content to any user within 1.5 miles of your location. This app has been banned by many schools.

## **Want to be more media savvy? Check out these sites!**

**Common Sense Media** <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>

- Includes all media, movies, gaming, social media, teen dating issues & tons more!

**PewResearch.org** <http://www.pewresearch.org/2013/05/21/teens-social-media/>

- **How safe is your family online?** Pew Research has a nifty, interactive short quiz on your family's social media and internet safety!

**Other resources:** (c.f. [www.cmdnet.org](http://www.cmdnet.org) )

- <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/apps-put-kids-physical-danger-38070871>
- <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/teens-tech-inside-online-bullying-38128193>
- <http://abcnews.go.com/Lifestyle/tweens-technology-parents-apps/story?id=38059749>
- <http://familyshare.com/parenting/10-things-parents-and-kids-should-know-about-the-snapchat-app>
- <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/social-media-smarts.html>